

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BROADBAND TAX INCENTIVE BILL

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise to today in support of a bill I introduced last week along with my friend Senator MOYNIHAN and 26 other members on both sides of the aisle. The bill, S. 2698, the Broadband Internet Access Act of 2000, crates tax incentives for the deployment of broadband (high-speed) Internet services to rural, low-income, and residential areas.

This bill will ensure that all Americans gain timely and equitable access to the Internet over current and future generations of broadband capability.

The legislation provides graduated tax credits to companies that bring qualified telecommunication capabilities to targeted areas. It grants a 10-percent credit for expenditures on equipment that provide a bandwidth of 1.5 million bits per second (mbps) to subscribers in rural and low-income areas, and a 20-percent credit for delivery of 22 mbps to these customers and other residential subscribers.

This bill has been endorsed by a number of organizations, including Bell Atlantic, MCI/Worldcom, Corning Incorporated, the National Telephone Cooperative Association, the Association for Local Telecommunications Services, the United States Distance Learning Association, and the Imaging Science and Information Systems Center at Georgetown University Medical Center.

Mr. President, in a few short years, the Internet has grown exponentially to become a mass medium used daily by over 100 million people worldwide. The explosion of information technology has created opportunities undreamed of by previous generations. In my home state of Montana, companies such as Healthdirectory.com and Vanns.com are taking advantage of the global markets made possible by the stunning reach of the Internet.

The pace of broadband deployment to rural America must be accelerated for electronic commerce to meet its full potential, however. Broadband access is an important to our small businesses in Montana as water is to agribusiness.

I am aware of all of the recent discussion regarding the "digital divide" and I am very concerned that the pace of broadband deployment is greater in urban than rural areas. However, there

is some positive and exciting news on this front as well. The reality on the ground shows that some of the "gloom and doom" scenarios are far from the case. By pooling their limited resources, Montana's independent and cooperative telephone companies are doing great things. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

AGRICULTURAL RISK PROTECTION ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, recently Congress passed the Agricultural Risk Protection Act. This legislation provides reform for the Federal Crop Insurance Program, economic assistance to farmers, and the establishment of new, innovative programs to assist the agricultural community. One of the innovative programs established in the bill is what I have termed the Agriculture Marketing Equity Capital Fund.

The Agriculture Marketing Equity Capital Fund will assist independent grain and livestock producers nationwide develop new value-added agricultural opportunities. Independent producers will use these funds to develop business plans, feasibility studies, and business ventures with packers and processors.

While I was able to garner the support of many of the nation's largest commodity organizations, I met fierce opposition from the American Meat Institute's Washington lobbyists. My floor statement during the debate over the crop insurance conference report was highly critical of their efforts. It is not my intent to attack the individual members of AMI, but I believe it is important that they understand my position.

AMI's Washington lobbyists misrepresented the provision. A story written within "Inside AMI" recently explained:

Senator Chuck Grassley pushed conferees to provide for a \$35 million Agriculture Marketing Equity Capital Fund. The proposal was yet another attempt to fund an NPPC proposal that seeks to secure government funding to establish a national pork cooperative and use government funds to buy, build or purchase equity in a pork slaughter and processing facility.

This a blatant misrepresentation of the facts. My provision never had anything to do with publicly financing the construction of a pork plant.

My staff did contact AMI's Washington lobbyists who explained the opposition was based on the possibility of government-funded competition and specifically that funds would be used to develop a plant. In good faith, my staff offered AMI's Washington lobbyists an opportunity to offer their input on the legislation.

I cannot guarantee that AMI's input would have been acceptable to me, but we will never know if a mutually bene-

ficial position could have been established because my office never received a response. I have been a friend of the agriculture community for a very long time. I am disappointed and dismayed by the way this was handled by AMI's Washington representatives.

As I promised in my crop insurance floor statement, I am today asking unanimous consent to place a list of AMI's member companies in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Once again, I'm not saying that every processor or packer on this list knew what AMI's Washington lobbyists were doing, but I hope to inform every member what happened and why independent producers won't have the funds to reach out to processors in joint ventures and receive working capital to help everyone survive and thrive. I am also enclosing the text of a letter I recently sent to AMI's members.

It is my hope that members of AMI see the value of my efforts and work with me in the future to improve the plight of the independent producer. Providing stability to family farmers through joint ventures with AMI's membership would only serve to benefit both parties in the long-run.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JUNE 9, 2000.

DEAR AMI MEMBER: I am writing to express how disappointed I am with your Washington lobbyists and their efforts to misrepresent and thus undermine my attempts to help American farmers.

You may have read a recent "Inside AMI" story claiming that, "Senator Grassley pushed conferees to provide for a \$35 million Agriculture Marketing Equity Capital Fund. The proposal was yet another attempt to fund a National Pork Producers Council proposal that seeks to secure government funding to establish a national pork cooperative and use government funds to buy, build or purchase equity in a pork slaughter and processing facility."

This claim is a blatant misrepresentation of the facts. The truth is that the provision your lobbyists were attacking had nothing to do with publicly financing the construction of a pork plant. These funds are intended to be used by independent grain and livestock producers to develop business plans, feasibility studies, and business ventures with packers and processors. While some may believe the truth is no longer relevant in Washington, D.C., that attitude will be given no quarter in dealings with me.

My staff reached out to your's to make certain they understood the error in their representations of my proposal, as well as to request alternative suggestions. No response ever came. Unfortunately, many of my colleagues were misled by your staff, and my proposal was gutted.

I wanted you to hear directly from me because I have had a long and positive working relationship with many AMI members over the years and I hope that this can be the case in the future. I believe, however, that it would be appropriate to investigate for yourself the concerns I have raised about your Washington representatives.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senator.

P.S.: I have included a copy of my floor statement for your review.

AMERICAN MEAT INSTITUTE MEMBERS

Bar-S Foods Co.
 Birchwood Foods—Division of Kenosha Beef Int'l.
 Burke Corporation
 Coleman Natural Products, Inc.
 DeAns Pork Products
 Devault Foods
 Diamond Stainless
 Evans Food Products Company
 Fresh Mark, Inc.
 E.W. Knass & Sons, Inc.
 F. Wardynski & Sons, Inc.
 Farmlands Foods, Inc.
 Foodbrands America, Inc.
 Fred Usinger, Inc.
 Julian Freirich Company
 Greater Omaha Packing Co., Inc.
 Harrington's in Vermont, Inc.
 Hormel Foods Corporation
 Huiskens Meats
 Indiana Packers Corporation
 Jac Pac Foods Ltd.
 Johnsonville Foods
 Kowalski Sausage Company, Inc.
 Maverick Ranch Lite Beef, Inc.
 MPCA, Inc.
 Norbest, Inc.
 Omaha Steaks, Inc.
 Provimi Veal Corporation
 Stevison Ham Company
 Sun-Husker Foods, Inc.
 Taylor Packing
 Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.
 Wright Brand Foods, Inc.
 Certified Angus Beef Program
 Foodcomm International
 International Natural Sausage Casing Association
 KoSa
 Meat and Livestock Australia
 New Zealand Meat Producers Board
 Packaging Digest Magazine
 The Schroeder Group
 ABC Research Corporation
 A.C. Legg Inc.
 Advanced Instruments Inc.
 AEW Thurne, Inc. Ltd.
 Alfacel, Inc.
 ALKAR
 Amana Appliances
 American Engineering Corporation
 Aspen Systems
 Bell-Mark Inc.
 Bell Paper Box, Inc.
 Bettcher Industries, Inc.
 BioControl Systems, Inc.
 Blentech Corporation
 BOC Gases
 Bolton & Menk, Inc.
 Bridge Machine Co., Inc.
 Bunzl Distribution USA
 Carruthers Equipment Company
 Carter & Burgess, Inc.
 Cretel Food Equipment Inc.
 Custom Metalcraft, Inc.
 CVP Systems, Inc.
 DAPEC, Inc./NUMAFA USA
 Deltrak, Inc.
 Dewied International, Inc.
 The Dupps Company
 Equipment Exchange Company of America
 The Facility Group
 The Ferrite Company
 Flavex Protein Ingredients—Division of Arnhem, Inc.
 FoodUSA.Com
 Foss North America, Inc.
 FPEC CORP of Arkansas
 F.R. Drake
 G.B.C-111 International, LTD.

General Machinery Corporation
 GlobalFoodExchange.com
 Grain Processing Corporation
 Grote Company
 The HACCP Consulting Group, L.L.C.
 Handtmann, Inc.
 Hansen-Rice, Inc.
 Hantover, Inc.
 Harpak, Inc.
 The Haskell Co.
 HDR Engineering, Inc.
 Heat and Control, Inc.
 Henningsen Cold Storage Company
 Hollymatic Corporation
 Hutchison-Hayes Separators, Inc.
 Hyder North American, Inc.
 Hydrite Chemical Company
 IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.
 International Casings Group, Inc.
 J.M. Swank Company
 Jem Analytical Laboratory Services
 JetNet Corporation
 Jif-Pak Manufacturing, Inc.
 Koch Supplies Inc.
 Le Fiehl Company
 Linker Machines
 Loma International, Inc.
 Mahaffy & Harder Engineering Company
 Maja Equipment
 Marlen Research Corporation
 Mepaco/Apache Stainless Equipment Corp.
 Mettler Toledo
 Mince Master
 Nalco Chemical Co.
 Neogen Corporation
 New Science Management
 Norwood Marking Systems, Inc.
 NSF International
 NuTEC Manufacturing, Inc.
 Planet Products Corporation
 Prime Prodata, Inc.
 Prime Label Consultants, Inc.
 Remco Products Corporation
 Ross Industries, Inc.
 Rudolph Industries
 Russell Harrington Cutlery Co.
 Karl Schnell, Inc.
 Sensitech, Inc.
 S.F.B. Plastics, Inc.
 Silliker Laboratories Group
 Speco, Inc.
 The Stellar Group
 Strahman Valves, Inc.
 Tipper Tie, Inc.
 Treif USA, Inc.
 Triton Commercial Systems
 Unitherm Food Systems
 Vande Berg Scales
 CV999 Packaging Systems
 Waterlink/Hycor
 Whizard Protective Wear Corporation
 York Saw & Knife
 Zer-O-Loc Insulated Panel & Door Systems

Juan Avina, 21, San Antonio, TX.
 Theodoro Espada, 33, Dallas, TX.
 Samuel Foster, 30, Chicago, IL.
 Jonathan Hayes, 28, New Orleans, LA.
 Johnny Jackson, 21, Detroit, MI.
 Jamie Jones, 21, Miami-Dade County, FL.
 Frank Ivery Odom, 23, Washington, DC.
 Antonio Rodriguez, 20, Kansas City, MO.
 Carlos Santiago, 23, Chicago, IL.
 Eric T. Smith, 24, Chicago, IL.
 Michael Theard, 35, New Orleans, LA.
 Lakecia Wesley, 20, Washington, DC.
 Unidentified male, 53, Charlotte, NC.
 Unidentified male, Newark, NJ.

S. RES. 319

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise in support of S. Res. 319, which the Senate approved on Friday, during National Homeownership Week. I thank my colleagues for supporting this important resolution which affects the security and welfare of Missourians and all Americans. This resolution addresses the importance of placing quality housing within reach of a greater number of Americans as well as improving housing opportunities for Americans at all income levels. I, along with my colleagues, support the efforts of Habitat for Humanity and "The House the Senate Built" project.

As you know, the largest debt most families take on in their lifetimes is a home. Over 65 percent of Americans own a home, as do approximately 80 percent of Americans over the age of 50. This represents real progress. In 1940, fully 56 percent of Americans were renters. Clearly, America has come a long way. People buy homes for different reasons. A home can be a place of safety to raise a family, the potential of financial security, a sense of community. All around Missouri, and across this great nation, couples of all ages agree that buying a home is among the essential steps a family takes to ensure stability and prosperity in their lives.

While homes are a worthwhile investment, they also are expensive. Real estate experts recommend that families buy homes valued at over three times their annual income—a sum far greater than what families could pay back in a year, or two, or even five. So, most Americans take out a mortgage. Once this burden of debt is behind them, they are free to dream new dreams—pay for their children's or grandchildren's education, travel, or make other investments.

Homeownership is an important factor in promoting economic security and stability for American families. The level of homeownership among foreign-born naturalized citizens who have been in the United States for at least six years is the same as the level of homeownership of the Nation as a whole. When families such as these, who are new to our shores, prosper, we as a nation prosper.

This resolution expresses the Senate's concern for improving homeownership in America. The resolution

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it has been more than a year since the Columbine tragedy, but still this Republican Congress refuses to act on sensible gun legislation.

Since Columbine, thousands of Americans have been killed by gunfire. Until we act, Democrats in the Senate will read some of the names of those who lost their lives to gun violence in the past year, and we will continue to do so every day that the Senate is session.

In the name of those who died, we will continue this fight. Following are the names of some of the people who were killed by gunfire one year ago today, on June 14, 1999: